


The Crime of Being Married, Life Magazine, 18 March 1966

The Crime of Being Married



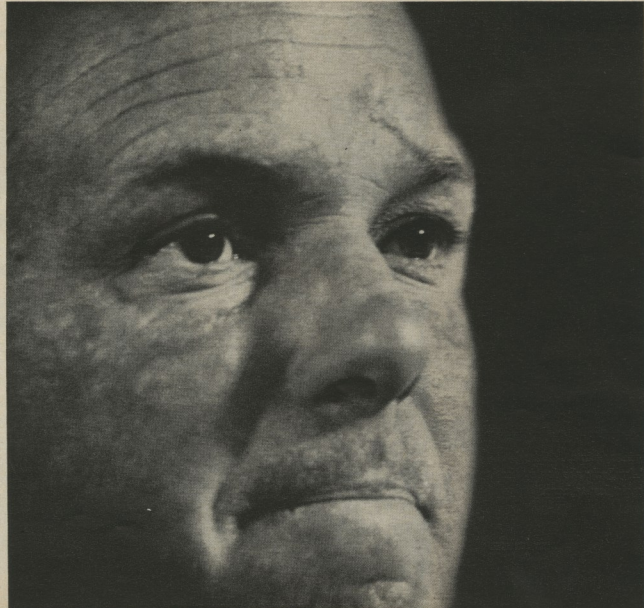
***A Virginia couple
fights to overturn
an old law against
miscegenation***

She is Negro, he is white, and they are married. This puts them in a kind of legal purgatory in their home state of Virginia, which specifically forbids interracial marriage.

Last week Mildred and Richard Loving lost one more round in a seven-year legal battle, when the Virginia Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the state's antimiscegenation law. Once again they and their three children were faced with the loss of home and livelihood.

Both Lovings were born and raised in the isolated hill country around Caroline County, north of Richmond, where there has always been an easy-going tolerance on the race question. It stirred little fuss when the couple culminated a long and agonized courtship by traveling to Washington, D.C. to get married in 1958. But five weeks later the county sheriff routed them out of bed at 2 a.m. and took them off to jail. A local judge handed down a year's sentence but suspended it if they agreed to leave the state immediately and stay away for 25 years. Badly frightened and unaware of their right of appeal, the Lovings lived five years of hand-to-mouth exile in Washington.

Even so, they were re-arrested when they returned for a visit to Mildred's family. Released on bail, they wrote a letter to then-Attorney General Robert Kennedy, asking for help. This led the American Civil Liberties Union to take an interest in their case. The Lovings decided to take up permanent residence in Virginia and fight. Now their case will return to federal court—where *Loving vs. Virginia* may well become the next big landmark in civil rights.



Mildred Loving, 26, and husband Richard, 32, consider latest setback in their battle to win the right to live in Virginia.

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